UNITED
NATIONS

S

Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/1997/253
26 March 1997
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: ARABIC

LETTER DATED 25 MARCH 1997 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF IRAQ TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith a letter dated 20 March 1997 from Mr. Mohammed Said Al-Sahaf, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Iraq, concerning the violations committed by the U-2 aircraft.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Nizar HAMDOON
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

97-08114 (E) 260397 260397

/...

Annex

Letter dated 20 March 1997 from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Iraq addressed to the President of the Security Council

We refer to our previous letters addressed to the President of the Security Council concerning the violation of Iraq's airspace by the United States U-2 spy plane on the pretext of conducting aerial surveys for the Special Commission.

I should like to inform you that this aircraft, which takes off from Saudi territory, has continued its invasions and penetrations of Iraq's airspace in violation of the country's sovereignty and security. As of the end of February 1997 it had made 340 overflights, for a total flight time of 1,513 hours and 47 minutes, since it began such operations in August 1991.

The facts that have come to light since this aircraft was first brought into use, which are set forth in our aforementioned letters, and the ill repute the aircraft has acquired from its past espionage activities in various parts of the world, make it incumbent upon the United Nations to re-examine the question of the continued coercive use of the aircraft by the United States of America to violate Iraq's airspace in a manner totally incompatible with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations as they relate to respect for the sovereignty of all Member States.

We condemn these unjustified violations of our airspace and take this opportunity to reaffirm the request we have consistently made in the 118 letters on this matter that we have addressed to the Secretary-General of the United Nations that Iraqi aircraft be used instead of foreign aircraft in the work of the Special Commission in order to exclude any possibility of such aircraft being used for purposes prejudicial to Iraq's sovereignty and security.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Mohammed Said AL-SAHAF
Minister for Foreign Affairs
of the Republic of Iraq